— Discussion on Tulbal Project will be held soon thereafter;

— The Directors General of Military operations of the two countries will remain in regular weekly contact on the hotline;

— The Sub-commission of the Joint Indo-Pakistan Commission will meet at an appropriate time;

— The Instruments of Ratification of the Agreement on the Prohibition of Attack against Nuclear Installations and Facilities will be exchanged in January, 1991;

— The Foreign Secretaries will meet again in New Delhi towards the end of February, 1991.

Streamlining of postal services in the country

728. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to streamline the postal services throughout the country and also propose to remove subsidy on postal services;

(b) if so, the details of the steps Government propose to contemplate to streamline the postal services, and

(c) what is the extent to which the postal services would be improved by the end of the current financial year?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS AND THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI JAI PRAKASH): and No, Sir.

India has the biggest postal network in the world and the expansion of this network has taken place as a result of the seven five year plans. The system is already streamlined But in a network of 1.47.663 post offices and 5,00,890 letter boxes involving about 3,00,000 regular full time staff and about 3,00,000 part time staff and the dependence of the Department on railways, roadways and airways combined with the increasing density of population multi stroved buildings coming up in major cities and repid rise of traffic has created a set of problems which has resulted in slower delivery of mail. One of the contributing factors has also been the ban on creation of posts as also the inability of the Department to introduce any measures for modernisation and mechanisation due to shortage of resources and resistance from the staff.

It is in this context that the report of the Committee of Excellence is being processed in which a number of proposals have been made which are under active consideration. One of the proposals relates to removal of subsidy on the postal services over a period of 5 years because the committee felt that until the Department can generate adequat resources, it may not be able to make the required investments in modernisation.

(b) Some proposals made by the Committee relating to introduction of technology are under consideration

(c) the steps that are being taken to improve the postal services during the current financial year are to optimise the use of existing assets and resources and improve the working to the extent, we receive the cooperation of the staff in improving productivity. To reduce the dissatisfaction of the staff, a few proposals to improve the terms and conditions are under consideration

Modern Technology in Road Building

729. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Government has underlined the need for absorption of modern technology in building roads in the country;

(b) if so, the details of the new technology/methods Government propose to adopt to construct roads in the country;

(c) the estimated length of National Highways to be repaired during the current financial year; and

(d) the details of state in whcih these would be contructed/repaired?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI MANUBHAI KOTADIA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The need for modernisation of road construction technology is recognised. Ministry is continuously making efforts to propagate modern technology for the construction of National Highways and other roads in the country. Steps taken in this regard include revision of specifications to cover new materials/methodologies, pre-qualification of contractors; mandatory use of required machinery; upgrading technology of indigenous equipment; etc.

(c) and (d) Whole length of the National Highway system (33704 km) is covered every year insofar as Ordinary Repairs are concerned. As regards Periodical Renewals, it is estimated that approximately 2380 kms will be taken up during the current financial year covering almost all the States and U Ts in the country

Foreign aided water and irrigated projects in the country

730. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Government have decided to give top priority to the foreign aided water and irrigation projects in the country;

(b) if so, the details of the foreign aided water and irrigation projects in the country;

(c) the steps at which each of the said project stands; and

(d) what steps Government propose to take to expedite its completion?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI MANUBHAI KOTADIA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. A statement giving the details is enclosed. (*See* below).

(c) and (d) Irrigation Projects are Planned, funded and implemented by State Governments. The Irrigation and water Resources Projects mentioned in the enclosed statement funded by external agencies are all on-going projects and are in various stages of implementation

Statement

Sl No	Name of the Project	Duration Project/ of Credit closing date	Quantum of assistance
1	2	3	4
	WORLDS BANK		
1	A P Composite Irrigation-II Project . . .	30-6-94	US $ 271 m
2	Bihar Public Tubewell Project	31-5-94	US $ 68 m
3	Gujarat Medium Irrigation-II Project . . .	31-12-90	US $ 172 m
4	Sardar Sarovar Dam & Power	30-6-95	US $ 300 m